

Falls Creek Neighborhood Association

September 27, 2006

Dear Fellow Taskforce Members,

It has been a sincere pleasure serving with you as a member of the EEHVS Task Force. Our task force has accomplished a great deal of work and I believe we have conducted ourselves with the utmost of integrity and ethics. Whatever the outcome, we can be proud that our recommendations have been based on an honest and sincere attempt to preserve the best possible quality of life for generations to come in Evergreen.

Throughout this process, I have been the designated representative of the Falls Creek Neighborhood Association. We are approximately 141 homes immediately adjacent (North) of Evergreen Valley College. Because of our close proximity to the College property, we felt it was essential to specifically comment, in writing, on the various development proposals being considered at the College.

Residential Development

Lot sizes in the Falls Creek neighborhoods are at least 8,000 square feet and the majority of homes are at least 3,500 square feet in size or larger. It's for this reason that we believe the College's proposal to build 4-story high density apartment buildings next door to our homes is in clear violation of the City's Guiding Principle #2, which states: *"Ensure new development is compatible (in terms of design, density, massing, etc.) to adjacent properties and is well integrated with existing neighborhoods and surroundings."* There is simply nothing "compatible or integrated" about building 4-story apartments next to large single family homes. Furthermore, we believe the developer's proposal to build 500 high density residential units in 4-story buildings should be modified in favor of no more than 300 residential units comprised of a mix of housing types to include approximately 130 two-story town homes, 50 multi-family residential units, and 120 affordable/work residential units.

Commercial Development

We respect the College's desire to generate operating income through long-term commercial leases of its land. After all, they've had success with their current shopping center and the Long's Drug anchor store located there. However, their continued insistence to include a full-service supermarket as part of their current proposal is shortsighted and selfish. For more than three years, this proposal has been opposed by nearby residents, community activists, business people, attorneys and even the former task force members who developed the original Evergreen Development Policy in 1992. And yet the College continues to insist that, in order to be successful, their expanded commercial center must include a full-service supermarket. Approval of this proposal would be tragic for our community. It would put at risk two nearby grocery stores, potentially leading to



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their closure. This would no doubt weaken those shopping centers resulting in blight and instability in the very heart of our neighborhoods. I simply don't accept the College's argument that, in order for their new commercial center to be successful, it must be anchored by a full-service supermarket. The existing center is already quite successful and anything added to it will further contribute to its success. It just doesn't make sense to add yet another supermarket to an already saturated area when there is an Albertson's just 1.37 miles away (2 minutes), a Save Mart across the street from that, and a Safeway 1 mile away (3 minutes) from that. Our community and the City of San Jose must work to support the two community grocery stores, Lunardi's and Cosentino's that took the risk to be embedded within our neighborhoods. Perhaps the feasibility of yet another supermarket in the Evergreen area can be studied sometime in the future but the climate is clearly not conducive today. The fact that the College continues to pursue a proposal that is so clearly opposed by the community and would result in such a detrimental impact to our neighborhoods is nothing short of mystifying.

With regard to the commercial development that *should* be approved for the College property, we appreciate their attention to a high level of architectural detail in their designs so far and look forward to participating in further design development. We look forward to working closely with the developers to negotiate some of the simpler issues like the delivery times and routes of large trucks coming in and out of the center, and developing sound buffers and creating tree lines to improve aesthetics of the neighborhood. Clearly, any open space that can be created or tree lines that can be built up to improve the aesthetics is critical in order to ensure compatibility between the residential neighborhood and the commercial buildings.

Public Use and Open Space Proposals

We are very excited about the plans for a new public library to be built on the College property site and endorse the placement of the library as illustrated in diagram "Alternative D" which would place the library on the Northwest corner of the property at the intersection of San Felipe Road and Paseo de Arboles. This location provides the best access for the public to the facility and is endorsed by the City's librarian. Unfortunately, of the entire 27 acres of property remaining, the developer's proposal has earmarked only 1 acre for open space and/or parks. We would obviously like to see more space preserved for parkland and open space wherever possible.

Status Quo Proposal

I would be remiss if I did not include a strong pitch for a no-growth, status quo proposal as part of these remarks. Our neighborhood has had numerous meetings to study and debate the developer's proposals over the past three years and there is a large contingent of our folks who believe strongly that the College should be preserving its property for educational purposes only. In their mind, any other proposal put before the City for approval should be denied. Period. Then again, other members of our neighborhood support some level of "conversion" of this land to residential and commercial purposes. However, there is one message upon which everyone seems is clearly united: our neighborhood will not support

EVERGREEN VALLEY COLLEGE



Alternative D
Mixed Use with no Underlying Land Use Designation
High Density Residential
Medium High Density Residential
Public/Open Space

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amenity packages that come at the expense of our quality of life. In other words, ball parks and community centers mean nothing if we sit in gridlocked traffic and our lifestyle has deteriorated to such an extent because of overpopulation. To say the least, the subject of "amenity trade-offs" has not been a popular one around our neighborhood.

Summary

On behalf of the Falls Creek Neighborhood Association, I sincerely appreciate your consideration of our position on the issues before the Task Force. In summary, we recommend the following regarding the Evergreen College site:

- (1) Approve no more than 300 residential units and strive for a mix of residential types to include town homes, multi-family and affordable. Avoid constructing 4-story buildings adjacent to single family homes which would violate a key Guiding Principle.
- (2) Prohibit the College from building a full-service supermarket on the College site as part of this approval process. Consider studying the feasibility of another grocery store at a much later time when the market is more conducive, perhaps in 10 years.
- (3) Ensure that there is a sufficient buffer developed between the existing homes and neighborhood and the new commercial development by building up tree lines, etc.
- (4) Construct the library on San Felipe Road (see Alternative D).
- (5) Reconsider converting any of the College land to residential or commercial and instead maintain all of it for future educational purposes.
- (6) Resist, at all costs, trading amenities for quality of life.

Sincerely,



David Zenker

Falls Creek Neighborhood Association